

First Presbyterian Church
NW Corner Adams & Park Sts.
Tallahassee
Leon County
Florida

HABS No. FLA-162

HABS
FLA
37-TALA
7.

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. FLA-162

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Location: Florida, Leon County, Tallahassee, NW corner,
Adams and Park Streets (Lot No. 125)

Present Owner: First Presbyterian Church, Tallahassee

Present Occupant: First Presbyterian Church, Tallahassee

Present Use: Religious activities

Brief Statement
of Significance: This is the oldest church in Tallahassee,
built in 1835-1838. On several occasions
the church was used as a refuge against
Indian attacks.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: First Presbyterian Church, dedicated May 13, 1838.
2. Date of erection: 1835-1838.
3. Original construction: Building originally 48' x 68', and cost \$13,370.60. Roof wood work was mortised and tenoned, no nails used in the original building. The bell is original, a gift of Elder David G. Wilson.
4. Notes on alterations and additions: West end of sanctuary extended and a choir and organ loft added, windows (originally double-tiered and rectangular) pointed arched openings. The original round arch back of the pulpit was also changed to a pointed arch. Remainder of complex not included in this survey.
5. Important old views: An 1870 photograph shows original windows and tower, balcony over front entrance, and chimney at right front; in possession of owner.
6. Sources:
 - a. "An Historical Sketch of the First Presbyterian Church, Tallahassee Florida," Florida State Library.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
HABS No. FLA-162 (Page 2)

- b. Files of the Florida North Central Chapter, A.I.A., Tallahassee, Florida.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: A one-story, brick bearing wall structure of Greek Revival style, four columned portico entrance, narthex, and sanctuary surrounded on three sides by balconies. Remainder of complex not included in this survey.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent, although extensively remodeled.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 42' (steps not included, front) x 96' (not including apse).
2. Foundation: Masonry bearing wall.
3. Wall construction: Masonry bearing wall with stucco covering, painted white. Windows set into recessed panels formed by base and piers.
4. Porches, stoops, etc.: Entry portico full width of church with four masonry columns stuccoed, iron railing, quarry tile floor, coffered plaster ceiling, shingled gable roof, half-circular louvered opening in pediment. Portico surmounted by three-story, shingled tower plus spire: plain first story; clocks in two sides, and matching round windows with 6 lights in other two sides of second story, and pilasters at the corners; pointed louvered openings each face of third story of tower, urns at each corner; octagonal spire covered with sheet metal. Concrete steps both ends of portico.

5. Chimneys: One brick chimney in north wall, pointed arch cap. Modern brick chimney in apse end.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Two doors (modern) in entrance (east) elevation, doorway has pointed arch, lights in diamond pattern.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Double hung, diamond shaped lights; top sash fits pointed arch head. One interior shutter (right rear off balcony) remains.
7. Roof:
 - a. Shape and covering: Gable roof, composition roofing.
 - b. Cornice and eaves: Wood cornice and boxed eaves, metal gutter and downspouts.

C. Technical Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Narthex opens from porch into sanctuary and by two stairways to balconies on three sides of sanctuary; choir, robing rooms, pulpit and stairs to half basement in octagonal apse. Remainder of complex not included in survey.
2. Stairways: Two stairways to balconies from narthex, "U"-shaped stair, molded railing, two square balusters per tread, turned newels, winders.
3. Flooring: Wood. New oak strips.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster, wood strip wainscot.
5. Interior doorways and doors: Two doorways, two doors per doorway.
6. Interior trim: Solid wood, tapered round, modified Doric columns supporting balconies, show adze marks. Paneled fascia of balcony.
7. Lighting: Modern electric
8. Heating: Modern heating and air conditioning

HABS
FLA

37-TALA

7-

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
HABS No. FLA-162 (Page 4)

- D. Site: The structure faces east, part of religious complex.
Peripheral planting.

Prepared by F. Blair Reeves
College of Architecture and Fine Arts
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida
February 1962